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# **Daily Environment Report**

March 16, 2017 - Number 50

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# Leading the News

#### Climate Regulation

Trump Demands Automaker Jobs After Fuel Economy Rollback
President Donald Trump is laying out an explicit quid pro quo for automakers: He'll cut them a
break on environmental standards and wants more hiring in return.

# Motor Vehicles

Does Golden State Hold Trump Card on Auto Emissions?

The state of California may have the power to thwart the Trump administration's attempts to roll back auto industry rules on greenhouse gas emissions from cars and trucks, according to environmental attorneys.

# News

#### Air Pollution

China to Establish Air Pollution Research Fund

China will establish a special fund to direct scientific research toward fighting air pollution.

#### Air Pollution

Missing California Ozone Plans Prompt Litigation Threat

Missing plans detailing strategies to reduce ozone pollution in California prompted a litigation threat from environmental advocates, who want the EPA to take action against the state for not meeting a Clean Air Act deadline.

# Asbestos</span>

Asbestos Admiralty Suit Tossed, Laborer's Work Land-Based

A federal court doesn't have admiralty jurisdiction over claims that a stevedore developed mesothelioma from workplace asbestos exposure, the Middle District of Louisiana said March 13 (Signal Mut. Indem. Ass'n v. Asbestos Corp., 2017 BL 77831, M.D. La., 15-00633, 3/13/17).

# Climate Change

Tillerson May Face Deposition About 'Wayne Tracker' Emails

New York will seek to question top Exxon Mobil Corp. executives under oath as part of a probe into the accuracy of the company's statements about climate change after discovering an email alias used by former Chief Executive Officer Rex Tillerson.

# Climate Policy

Cutting Climate Spending Made Harder by Obama's Budget Tactics

President Donald Trump will find the job of reining in spending on climate initiatives made harder by an Obama-era policy of dispersing billions of dollars in programs across dozens of agencies - in part so they couldn't easily be cut.

## Climate Science

House Republicans Seek 'Economical ly Viable' Climate Solutions

Nearly 20 House Republicans introduced a resolution that would commit Congress to finding "economically viable" solutions to climate change risks.

# Coal Mining

Trump's Infrastructure Plans Could Trigger Coal Hike

President Donald Trump's pledge to use American-made steel in his \$1 trillion infrastructure plan could boost coal mining activity by 5 percent, industry watchers predict.

# **EPA**

All EPA Regional, Program Action Must Seek Pruitt Review: Memo

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt is reserving approval authority for all agency actions typically overseen by regions and program offices through the beginning of April, according to a memo obtained by Bloomberg BNA.

# Energy

Gas Export Giant Scrambles to Find Enough Supply for Itself

One of the world's biggest natural gas exporters is struggling to find enough of the fuel to meet its own demand.

#### Energy

NuScale's Small Nuclear Reactor Passes First Regulatory Hurdle

The first-of-a-kind small modular nuclear reactor from NuScale Power LLC has cleared the first hurdle at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and entered the technical review stage.

#### Energy

Regulatory Burden Discourages Hydropower Investment: Industry

The prospects for future hydropower investment and large-scale projects are bleak barring regulatory changes to scale back license approval times, hydropower business representatives told House lawmakers March 15.

#### Energy

Trump's Coal Promise Faces a Test From 'Monstrous' Wind Farms

President Donald Trump, a fossil fuel champion who once called an offshore wind farm near one of his golf courses "monstrous," may have little chance of preventing the renewable fuel from

displacing some U.S. coal plants, Moody's Investors Service said.

# General Policy

European Investment Bank Issues 500 Million Euros of Green Bonds

The European Investment Bank issued 500 million euros (\$531 million) of its green bonds, doubling amount of environmental securities with a 20-year maturity it has outstanding to 1 billion euros.

# Great Lakes

# Brace for Battle to Restore Great Lakes Funding, Stabenow Says

Hope for the best, but expect the worst is the approach Michigan's senior senator is taking in anticipation of President Donald Trump's budget proposal, to be released March 16, which is rumored to have severe cuts to a Great Lakes restoration program.

# Hydraulic Fracturing

Trump Administration to Rescind Obama's BL M Rule on Fracking

The Trump administration said in a legal filing March 15 that it would begin rescinding an Obama-era rule setting standards for hydraulic fracturing on public lands.

#### International Climate

Canada Minister to Push Pruitt on Climate, Clean Energy Policies

Canada's environment minister will press the new EPA head March 16 to find ways to support the U.S. clean energy sector amid early signs the Trump administration may be more inclined to roll back climate policies to spur coal and other fossil fuel development.

#### Motor Vehicles

Renault Insists Its Cars Don't Cheat as Emissions Doubts Linger

Renault SA insisted its cars meet emissions rules after French newspaper Liberation reported that the country's economic-fraud watchdog found the vehicle maker had misled customers about how much its models pollute.

# Oil & Gas

BP Beats Oil Fraud Case Worth Billions

BP Exploration and Production Inc. defeated a \$256 billion lawsuit claiming that it defrauded the government by not satisfying regulations for an oil production facility constructed in the Gulf of Mexico, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit said (Abbott v. BP Exploration and Prod. Inc., 5th Cir., No. 16-20028, 3/14/17).

#### Pesticides

EPA Scientist Sided With Monsanto on Pest icide's Safety: Emails

An EPA scientist allegedly bragged that he could "kill" indications that Monsanto Co.'s widely-used Roundup weedkiller is linked to cancer, according to recently filed court documents (In re Roundup Products Liability Litigation, N.D. Cal., 3/14/17).

# Pesticides

EPA-Monsanto Collusion Reports Shock Former Agency Officials

A scientist accused of colluding with Monsanto Co. was a smart and dedicated employee whose sarcastic sense of humor may have landed him in hot water, say former colleagues.

#### Regulatory Policy

Senate Committee Postpones Contentious Regulatory Bills

A Senate committee postponed action March 15 on two contentious regulatory overhaul bills, including, for the first time, the Regulations from the Executive In Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act.

# Renewable Energy

As Electricity Use Slows, Brazil to Cancel New Power-Plant Deals

Brazil, the country that pioneered the use of government energy auctions to award contracts for generating electricity from renewables, now is working on one for developers seeking to get out of those deals.

# Renewable Energy

California Utilities Face Competition From Clean-Power Providers
California utilities are losing business to local power authorities that were created to deliver clean power to residents.

# Storage Tanks

Gas Station Violations to Cost Petroleum Companies \$3 Million

A California court is ordering three gas station operators and owners to pay \$3 million for continuing to violate underground storage tank protections (People of the State of Cal. v. Golden Gate Petroleum Co. et al., Cal. Super. Ct., 16CV004106, 3/13/17).

#### Taxes

Connecticut Joins Carbon Tax Debate

Connecticut has joined a growing pack of states debating a tax on carbon fuels.

# Toxic Substances

World's Most Popular Herbicide, Glyphosate, Not Carcinogenic: EU Science Panel
The world's most widely used herbicide, glyphosate, is not carcinogenic, the European
Chemicals Agency said March 15, opening the way for its continued use in the European Union.

## Water Pollution

Sewage From Mexico Tests Binational Framework

A discharge of sewage from Mexico into U.S. coastal waters is putting to the test a recent treaty minute signed between the two countries for addressing such events.

# Regulatory Agenda

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